DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 447 379 CG 030 479

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TITLE School Violence: A Literature Review.
PUB DATE 1999-11-00
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association (Point Clear, AL, November 17-19, 1999).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; Delinquency; Elementary Secondary Education; *Journal Articles; Juvenile Gangs; Literature Reviews; Mass Media Role; Peer Influence; Prevention; *School Safety; *Violence

ABSTRACT

In this literature review on school violence, over 4,000 sources were found in government reports, journal articles, editorials, and texts. This review is offered as a reference, with the implication that it represents only a cursory overview of this field of study. The paper begins by quoting articles that define school violence and theories as to why violence is occurring. Youth gangs are looked at by a number of sources. Student perceptions of violence are also highlighted. The influence of the media, profiles of individual cases, and articles on remediation and prevention are all cited. The literature review concludes with a look at system intervention programs targeted at making schools safer. (Contains 110 references.) (Author)

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School Violence: A Literature Review

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Point Clear, Alabama, November 17-19, 1999 .

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School Violence: A Literature Review

From the Office of the President of the United States comes one of the National Educational Goals 2000: that we would have "safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools" offering an "environment conducive to learning" (Executive Office of the President, 1990). The U. S. Department of Education reported that 6300 students were expelled in the 1996-1997 school year for carrying firearms: 58% had handguns, 7% had rifles or shotguns, and 35% had other weapons, including bombs and grenades.

Definition

The National Cable Television Association defined violence as "any overt depiction of the use of physical force – or credible threat of physical force – intended to physically harm an animate being or group of beings." (Executive Summary, p. ix) If one eliminates the word "depiction", then the applied definition fits all the articles reviewed below.

Statistically, the three main settings for expressing aggression in the United States are the streets, the home, and mass media (Goldstein & Conoley, 1998). Although school violence only involves one to ten percent of students, the nature of incidents has changed from words and fists to lethal weapons. In the four years from 1986 to 1990, 71 people were killed by guns in U. S. schools, 201 were seriously wounded, and 242 were held hostage at gunpoint (Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1990). Goldstein et al. (1995) speak of "downsizing deviance", wherein teachers and administrators see such high levels of violence that they no longer pay attention or discipline acts or behaviors which, when controlled, could avert violence.

"Why?"

There seem to exist more theories as to why school violence occurs than there are reported incidents of school violence. Following the Columbine shooting of April, 1999,

numerous theories abounded. An editorial article in the American Enterprise (July, 1999) centers on several recent shootings that targeted Christians. Over fifty specials and talk shows have featured comments, quotes, or interviews directly relating such children as Cassie Bernall (at Columbine) or a prayer group in West Paducah, Ky. (1997) as direct targets, because of their open expressions of faith. Many cite the acts as those of martyrdom, and report that thousands of youth across America are flocking to churches following such violent outbursts.

On the other hand, such ideas are often rejected by other writers. Dority (1999) contends that neither targeted groups such as Christians, nor violent media or music, nor access to the Internet, nor availability of weapons are critical points. She states that "all these simplistic solutions avoid confronting the much more difficult problems affecting children, like reducing poverty, improving child-rearing skills, and funding child-care services." (p. 9).

A second area of concentration for "blame" is parent control or supervision. Although 23 states allow sanctions of parents whose children commit crimes, and 13 states make parents criminally responsible for failure to supervise delinquent children, and 5 states have laws which incarcerate or fine parents for neglect (Dority, 1999), most of these laws are either not enforced, or are struck down by higher courts. Some researchers and educators (Hart, 1997; Hyman & Perone, 1998) believe that there are practices and policies within the system which may contribute to school violence by arousing anger, resentment, and distrust for authority among students who may not otherwise be prone to violence. Such factors include: discipline procedures such as corporal punishment and excessive use of time-out or other social alienation; the use of police or other law agencies to intervene with what some call "routine" or "minor" incidents; invasive strip searches; the use of undercover agents; and teacher use of sarcasm, name-calling, ridicule, or denigrating statements.

There are also several areas of developmental research related to violent or harmful behaviors. Since crimes in society are committed mainly by teenagers and young adults (Fonagey et al., 1997), developmental factors are believed to be part of the causal link. Several studies have proposed a relationship between level of psychological attachment (Bowlby, 1969, 1982) to several kinds of violence (Hare & Cox, 1987; Meloy, 1988a,b; Moffitt, 1993). The developmental nature of violence has also been traced back to developmental stages: infants and toddlers exposed to violence exhibit behaviors varying from avoiding contact with adults to clinging (Laor et al. 1995; Marans & Adelman, 1997); preschoolers exposed to violence express concern about their own bodies and often develop abnormally hostile behaviors (Marans, 1995); school-aged children seem to react in various ways, more closely related to the violence experienced; adolescents seem to act out their own sense of vulnerability by often putting themselves in high-risk situations (Appelbone, 1996; U. S. Department of Justice, 1995).

Much of the explanation for aggression among adolescents is derived from psychoanalytic theory. Many believe that experiencing violence or any trauma will affect children in the development of psychosocial, mood, cognitive, and general personality areas (Pynoos, 1993; Garbarino, 1993; Wallach, 1994; Jenkins and Bell, 1997). Further, many support Erikson's contentions that children who experience fear or stress in the trust and autonomy stages will experience crisis in the adolescent stage, which includes identity establishment (Durant et al., 1994; Pynoos and Eth, 1985; Wallach, 1994). Specifically, children exposed to violence often display both aggressive behavior and deficit school performance. Jenkins and Bell (1997) contend that adolescents may display high-risk belligerent behaviors to address their own fears and vulnerability. For example, many youth who commit violent crimes with weapons

reported that they originally carried the weapon because of fear of victimization (Nehara et al., 1996).

Gangs

Youth gangs in the U. S. have existed since the industrial revolution, when migration to cities left them to survive by stealing and pillaging. Organized crime has recruited youth since its inception. The difference in the past three decades reflect an expanding age range (ages 8 or 9 to over age 40), success in the drug and theft empires, and membership expansion to include millions of youth, in all classes and all areas (rural, urban, suburban). With lucrative trade and frightening weapons, gangs have defied authorities to stop them.

The school is still the main area for gang recruitment, socialization, and control (McEvoy, 1991). The two remedies suggested often, therefore, are school-related: hiring more teachers, to have smaller classes so the teachers can know the students, and person-centered curriculum where the teachers reach the students. Others have advocated dress codes or uniforms, staff training, and school safety plans. (Klein, 1995; Koduloy, 1998).

McEvoy (1991) contends that our cultural materialism has deepened the stronghold of gangs: to have more and more, children and youth turn from legitimate to illicit means of obtaining more, with drugs as the primary business of acquisition. Gangs also provide affiliation, identity, and sometimes even safety, for America's troubled youth. As peer pressure increases the need to own or possess the "right" clothes, cars, and technological gadgets, Arthur (1992) suggests that students who join gangs are often not any different than those who do not. He also advocates getting contracts with gang leaders to make schools a gang-neutral zone. In exchange, he advocates such programs as job placement assistance, special classes, breakfast programs, social skills building, community service within the schools, reinforcing achievement

expectations, and making schools once again the centers of communities. However, schools and communities often tend to ignore gangs, until a gang –related shooting occurs in or near a school(Huff, 1990, Kodluboy & Evinrud, 1993; Gaustad, 1991).

Garbarino (1995) suggests that traumatized children, or those who have been exposed to violence or abuse, are often drawn to groups which hold violence as both normal and expected behavior. Christoffel (1997) quotes one teen who explained: "If I join a gang I will be 50% safe, but if I don't I will be 0% safe." (p. 40).

Student Perceptions

Fatuan and Hoyle (1996), trainers of peer training programs in both incarceration facilities and diverse school facilities, suggest that today's youth do not perceive most acts of aggression, fighting, and gun use as violence. As they converse with students during training, they trace the typical scenario preceding a violent incident: the adolescent is often teased, used as a scapegoat, or is ostracized in some way because they do not fit in. These negative social interactions lead to anger, frustration, low self-esteem, and a feeling of isolation and vulnerability. Then some incident occurs in which the student feels they are shown disrespect. The culmination of the pattern of pain and anger leads to retaliation. Many youths, according to the authors, do not see such retaliation as violence, but as an act of self-defense. Their motto is "disrespect deserves disrespect" (p. 29). Thus violence becomes a viable (and to many, the only) means of conflict resolution.

Students do not report incidents to school authorities or other adults because they have basically lost respect for them. Between notoriety of abuse of power among adults in power, their own observation of adults who solve problems or deal with them by asserting power stances, and instances of negative stereotyping by adults, the teens see adults as unable or

unwilling to handle situations truly with justice. In addition, the students are also labeled by other students as "rat" "wimp", etc., for seeking adult intervention.

The use of violence, even including weapons such as guns, seems to be a matter of what Fatum and Hoyle call "operational parameters" (p. 31): the defining feature of weapons and violence becomes what is and what is not 'protection' of self-defense. Many who have killed parents and other relatives report feeling trapped in long term, devastating and debilitating situations or environments, so that killing the perceived perpetrator was the only means of release and survival. These youth seem to truly see homicide as the proper course of action.

How can such a perspective be changed? First, say Fatum and Hoyle (1996), we must listen. The teens want to be heard; they shun patronization. When they feel that there is a true forum of communication, where someone has listened to them, then they will listen. Fatum and Hoyle (1996) say that the best mediators in such an exchange are other teens – those who have been trained in social skills, mediation skills, negotiation skills. Then these adolescents serve as trainers for other youth. In addition to situational conflict mediation, Fatum and Hoyle advocate teaching fundamental interpersonal skills, so that students know how to communication without becoming the seeming perpetrator of disrespectful words or actions. Lessons in personal values and personal boundaries would be essential to such a course, which they believe should be entered into all core school curriculum at all levels. In addition, the authors suggest ways to help youth understand the meaning of loss in violent situations. For those insensitized to the actual physical pain by media or experience, to those who need to develop empathy for the friends and relatives of victims, alternatives are suggested. Finally, the authors advocate coping skills training. Students should be taught not only how to manage stress, frustration, or anxiety, but also need to understand how these sensations of pain lead to anger and consequently to violence.

Such knowledge would impact thinking patterns and would serve as a substantial motivator toward change in behavior patterns.

Influence of Media

Social psychologists have maintained, since the works of Bandura (1963), that viewing aggressive acts of violence on television influences behavior (Eron, 1992; Federman, J, 1997; Gerbner, George, & Gross (1998); Levine, 1996; Paik, Haejung, & Comstock, 1994; Smith, M. (1993). Aidman (1997) summarizes effects under three main categories: the learning of aggressive behavior by using attractive perpetrators, seemingly justified violence, violence combined with humor, and efficient use of weapons for violence; creating fearful attitudes and making them attractive through attractive victims of violence, unjustified violence, graphic depiction of violence, and rewards given to perpetrators of violence; and finally, desensitization to violence and increased tolerance for violence through extensive exposure. The National Cable Television Association sponsored a three-year study (1996) assessing the amount, nature, and context of violence in entertainment programming. With the definition of violence as "any overt depiction of the use of physical force – or credible threat of physical force – intended to physically harm an animate being or group of beings" (Executive Summary, p. ix), the survey labeled only 4% of programs as 'strongly violent'. However, in the first two years of the study, 58% (1994-1995) and 61% (1995-1996), respectively, of TV shows contained at least some violence. High risk elements for children among the shows included attractive perpetrators, violence which was justified, violence which went unpunished, violence with minimal subsequent consequences to the perpetrator or the victim, and realistic violence.

Concerns about the effect of movies on youth has been recorded since the 1930's (Charters, 1933). Each new form of media sparks new discussions on the issue. While no direct

relationship between media violence and societal violence can be proven, theories such as social learning theories of Vygotsky and Bandura, as well as behavior theories of Skinner, begin with the basic assumption that we learn and repeat behaviors that we see and hear.

After seeing a similar scene in Money Train in 1995, youths in New York set fire to a subway token booth by using a flammable spray substance (Murray, 1997). A 16-year-old in Los Angeles who shot a man reported that he and his friends watched such TV shows as Cops or America's Most Wanted, looking to "see some of my friends out there" (Mediascope, 1993). Many "copycat" incidents were reported in the 1970's in the U.S., copying a game of Russian roulette in The Deerhunter. In the same decade, an international crisis was caused by a hijack of a jetliner which copied the plot of The Doomsday Flight.

Several studies have analyzed the prevalence of violence on television (Gerbner and Signorielli, 1990; Lichter and Amundson, 1992, 1994; UCLA Center for Communication Policy, 1995; Mediascope, 1996). Analysis of broadcasting over time showed that levels of violence increased in the early 1970's, decreased in the mid-seventies, and has shown a gradual increase since then. Rates of violence (mean number of events per hour) have ranged from 5.0 per hour to 25.0 per hour. Rates are highest between 6:00 and 9:00 AM (165.7 per hour) and 2:00 to 5:00 PM (203 per hour). The highest rate recorded was in 1994, with an average of 2,605 violent acts in one day. Current overall level of violence stands at 44% (Murray, 1997).

Several scientifically sound studies have found strong links between media violence and violent attitudes, values, and behaviors. Berkowitz (1984, 1985) describes regular viewing of media violence and its effect on antisocial behavior: there is a cognitive process whereby violence is seen as a normative and therefore acceptable means of conflict resolution. Most psychologists and researchers contend that media violence is only one of the synthesized or

integrated causes of violence in society (Donnerstein, Seaby, and Eron, 1994; Menninger, 1995; Murray, 1994, 1995; Murray, Menninger, and Grimes, 1993; Osofsky, 1995).

In the House of Representatives, the first congressional hearing related to television violence was in 1952 (US Congress, 1952). In 1953, the Senate held its first major hearing before the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency (US Congress 1955 a, 1955 b). In 1969, The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (Baker and Bell, 1969) focused on media violence, and in 1972, the Surgeon General of the United States issued a report saying that viewing violence on TV made children more aggressive (Murray, 1973). In 1992, the APA Task force on Television and Society (Ofluston et al., 1992) confirmed that there are harmful effects of watching TV violence. The APA Commission on Violence and Youth (1993; Eron et al., 1994) continued to affirm these findings. The three avenues of affect were named as: direct effects, in which people see violence, become more aggressive, and value aggression for conflict resolution; desensitization, in which children and youth become less sensitive to pain and suffering of others; and the Mean World Syndrome, in which those who watch violence begin to see the world as mean and dangerous.

Murray (1997) reports research on violence in three areas: correlational studies were conducted (Robinson and Bachman, 1972; Atkin et al., 1979; Phillips, 1983; Sheeban, 1983; and Walker and Morley, 1991) to find strong relationships between time spent viewing violence and both self-reported aggressive or antisocial behaviors, as well as observed incidents of aggression and violence. Experimental studies began in the 1960's with Bandura and colleagues (Bandura, Ross and Ross, 1961, 1963) and Berkowitz and his colleagues (Berkowitz, 1962; Berkowitz and Rawlings, 1963; Berkowitz, Corwin, and Heironimus, 1963). Studies (Ellis and Sekyra, 1972; Gadow and Sprefkin, 1993; Grimes, Cathers, and Vernberg, 1996;

Hapkiewilz and Roden, 1971; Lovaas, 1961; Mussen and Rutherford, 1961; Ross, 1972) continued to show that children in experimental groups who viewed violence on television (including cartoons) showed more subsequent aggression and hurtful behavior than did controls who watched non-violent TV shows. The third area of research reported by Murray (1997) was a review of field studies. In these studies, children are fed a "diet" of either antisocial, neutral, or prosocial programs during their natural TV viewing, followed by behavioral observations in naturalistic setting (; Joy, Kimball, and Zalrack, 1986; Stein and Friedrich, 1972; Williams, 1986). Results consistently showed that viewing antisocial themes were followed by higher levels of aggression.

There were several within-subjects factors which were found to be associated with subsequent aggressive behaviors. Ekman et al. (1972) found that facial expressions of interest or enjoyment were predictors of subsequent aggression. Lefkowitz and associates (1972) conducted a ten-year longitudinal study which showed that valuing violent media at ages 8 and 9 was related to aggressive acts at age 18, but valuing violence at age 18 was not related to later violence. Gadow and Sprofkin (1993) and Grimes and associates (1996) found that 8-to 12-year-olds diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, or conduct disorder showed more interest in violence on TV and less subsequent emotional concern for victims, when matched with a group who did not have these diagnoses. Heresmann and associates (1984, 1986) found significant causal links between viewing violence at age 8 and serious crimes against persons at age 30.

Analyses of content conducted by Comstock and Paile (1991) showed fifteen situations in experimental studies which have been found to effect attitudes and behaviors: rewards for aggression (or no punishment) (Bandura, 1963); aggression perceived as justified (Berkowitz

and Rawlings, 1963); cues which relate to real life (Donnestein and Berkowitz, 1981); similarity between aggression and viewer (Rosekrans, 1967; Turner and Berkowitz, 1972); motivation to inflict harm (Geen and Stonner, 1972); violence with no subsequent pain or remorse (Atkin, 1963); no subsequent critical commentary (Lefcourt et al., 1966); violence which pleased the viewer (Erkman et al., 1972); violence plus verbal abuse (Lieberman Research, 1975); violence leaving the viewer in a state of arousal (Zillman, 1971); violence which advocates aggression by the viewer (Donnerstein and Berkowitz, 1981), and violence which leaves the viewer frustrated toward an outside source (Worchel, Hardy, and Harley, 1976)

Do research findings have an impact? In several instances the answer is affirmative. After Gerbner's twenty-year study (1994), television violence was shown to increase until 1992, but sharply declined after an intense 1993 congressional debate. Two subsequent studies (UCLA Center for Communication Policy 1995; Mediascope, 1996) show violence is increasing in the media, but that the movie industry has begun to see viewer violence as a serious problem in society (Kleeman, 1995; DKTV, 1995; Center for Media Literacy, 1995; Hundt and Mimm, 1995). Finally, teaming has begun between media and mental health professionals (Erm and Slaby, 1994; Livingston, 1994; Murray et al., 1993).

Professional Preparedness

In a 1996 study conducted by Furlong et al., 123 school psychologists completed the National School Violence Survey (Dear et al., 1995). The questionnaire covered background of subjects, their rating of violence at their service sites, their own involvement in violence intervention, their perception of impact of violence on students and staff at the schools, and self-reports of training in violence intervention. The researchers found that 78% of the respondents worry about their own safety on site at least once a year, but 74.8% have never considered

leaving the profession because of violence. The respondents reported experiencing little violence per site. Of the reported site-violence, incidents included mostly cursing and yelling, shoving or grabbing, kicking and punching, and ethnic taunting (within a 30-day recency period). When asked about the most violent incident they were aware of on site, 84% listed such acts as car vandalism, weapon threats, use of knife or sharp object, sexual attacks, or being hit by a club or pipe.

The authors took nineteen types of attacks and divided them into the following categories, in order of seriousness: bullying, harassment, property damage, serious physical violence, and deviant acts. When assessing the level of perceived violence by the school psychologists, they found that the more serious the violence, the greater the global perception that the school had serious violence problems. Finally, 85.4% of the subjects reported that they had no training related to school violence. Similarly, 28.8% felt prepared to address school violence.

The authors suggest that although bullying had the highest incident rate, most psychologists did not consider this as violence, and thus as cause for alarm. Both respondents and the researchers felt that there is a great need for training among such professionals.

The issue of bullying is a focal point in many school intervention programs world-wide (Banks, 1997). The key component of bullying is the ongoing nature of the pattern, whether it involves physical or psychological intimidation or harassment (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Olweus, 1993). Researchers estimate that at least fifteen percent of students are either bullied regularly or are the instigators of bullying; school size, racial composition, setting (rural, urban, suburban) do not seem to predict occurrence (Olweus, 1993). While males seem to use taunting, teasing,

hitting, and stealing, girls seem to use such indirect tactics as spreading rumors and enforcing social isolation ((Ahmad & Smith, 1994; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Relationships have been found between school bullying and criminal conviction in adulthood (Oliver, Hoover, & Hazler, 1994). According to student surveys, parents and teachers are often unaware of bullying, and those who are aware are not perceived as taking students seriously; students who report that they care are very uncertain as to how to help (Charach, Pepler, & Zeigler; Whitney & Smith, 1993).

Individual Profiles

In the case of recent and/or highly publicized school violence, in which one or two students injure or kill several people in the school, there are many (Depue, 1993; Monahan, 1981; Monahan & Steadman, 1994, 1996; Phillips, 1987) who believe that there may be a series of events, or a personal profile, which makes these events unique. McGee and DeBernardo (1999) analyzed thirteen such incidents within the past five years, and have developed a profile of what they have labeled the "classroom avenger". The characteristics which these particular perpetrators have in common include the following: male, rural or small community, event preceded by reprimand or discipline by school authority, teasing by peers or recent breakup with girlfriend, interest in violence in music, TV, or videos, and access to a gun. Of note, characteristics that do NOT characterize these individuals include known substance abuse, a history of documented mental illness or extreme displays of anger, or police record of any sort. The authors also suggest that time of year may be a factor, since all the reviewed incidents occurred between January and May. An edited psychological evaluation is described, and applications are discussed.

Remediation

Many researchers and educators agree that bullying is a first sign of possible violence, seeing both the bully and the victim as potential future perpetrators. The bully's use of control has the potential to escalate, and the victimization of the one bullied is also seen as a reason for acts of retributive aggression. The Moraitis School, the largest school system in Greece, has enacted a three-year plan which targets bullying as the first-strike intervention. There is a written document entitled the "Whole School Policy" which describes interventions and strategies to involve whole classes, counseling staff, parents and community members, to reinforce sanctions and assist victims (Doanidou & Xenakis, 1998).

In May 1994, urban educators met for a one-day conference (Asher, 1994) to discuss possible causes and solutions related to school violence. The groups listed many possible contributing factors, including high poverty concentration, unemployment of adults, paucity of role models, neglect and abuse, schools which were "often anonymous, alienating, and fraught with danger" (p. 1). Other school characteristics included size (too large), teacher isolation, the "fortress" syndrome (metal detectors, mechanical devices, and security forces), and fragmented, narrow, top-down interventions. The bottom line solution developed by these educators is to "change how everyone relates to each other" (p. 4). Toward that end, the group recommended several long-term interventions: better recruitment and training of teachers (with emphasis on living in the community with the children); in-service training for ALL school personnel together (including teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, administrators, and paraprofessionals); the inclusion in pre-professional training of social issues (such as violence, media, gun control, poverty, joblessness, and parenting); the teaching of socialization skills as part of required curriculum (including simple etiquette of greeting, self-respect and self-discipline, positive working relationships, and conflict mediation); a strong ban on teasing,

bullying, goading, heckling, and other forms of aggression; expansion of guidance counselor roles to include classroom teaching, as well as staff and parent training; bringing parents into schools on a regular basis for longer times (during class, and not just for 10-minute after-school conferences); serving as a network for parents (socialization, adult classes for vocational preparedness); plans and training for post-crisis interventions; a 'safe school' plan, and networking with and within the community.

Intervention

As more stringent measures are being considered in schools and with students, concern has again been raised about the Fourth Amendment students' rights against search and seizure. The school has been considered as being "in loco parentis" by common law doctrine. However, students began to test the boundaries of this assumption as early as 1969, when Tinker v. Des Moines independent School District granted a student the First Amendment Right to wear a black armband to protest the Vietnam War. In 1985, the Fourth amendment protection against search and seizure was tested in New Jersey v. T. L. O. (1985): a vice-principal searched the purse of a female who was suspected of carrying cigarettes against school policy. The vice principal found cigarettes, as well as rolling papers, marijuana, a marijuana pipe, plastic bags, a large sum of money, a list of students with amounts owed, and a letter implicating her as a dealer. When arrested, she claimed unlawful search, and the courts supported her; further, the court considered the school official as more of a government agent than a parent figure, and therefore made 'probable cause' a stronger case. The court then defined "reasonable suspicion" as grounds for the original search, thereby overturning its own original ruling. Twenty-four more recent cases are reviewed by Beyer (1997), who summarizes the findings by saying that the courts are tending to lean less toward individual rights and more toward the rights of school

authorities acting to protect schools and community from criminal and potentially violent behaviors.

In Heath High School in West Paducah, Kentucky in 1997, 14-year-old Michael Carneal gunned down classmates, killing three. Within three months, a school security committee had authorized a $148,000 security plan. Today, all visitors, teachers, and students wear identifying name tags around their necks; students sign consent forms for staff to rummage through backpacks, a ritual that is repeated every morning; the school has a uniformed security guard; all officials wear two-way walkie-talkies on their belts; emergency medical kits are in each classroom and disaster instructions in every handbook.

Many schools across the country have developed and implemented similar strategies. In April 1998, an Indiana school district became the first to install metal detectors in their elementary schools after three students were caught carrying guns. Across the country, spiked fences, motorized gates, and blast-proof metal covers for doors and windows are being installed. Policemen replace teachers for such interventions as bullying, loud noises, and gathering "anonymous tips". The debate continues about the possible negative effects on students, such as brain downshift from deep processing and creativity to fear and helplessness (Caine, 1994; Easterbrook, 1999)

Almost all school plans include a component of more effective behavioral management, discipline systems, and training for all staff. For some, these plans are seen as preventive measures; for other systems, this is actually their intervention plan. With the assumption that a system-wide training of all staff and students will reduce or eliminate violence, these schools have targeted "whole-student" approaches. Most have in common such elements as establishing a list of needs and priorities (usually based on type and number of incidents already reported)

(Lewis, 1997), a team approach with shared ownership (Taylor-Green et al., in press), an action plan with specific staff responsibilities (Sugai & Pruitt, 1993), a system for monitoring (Walker et al., 1996), clearly defined communication lines (Lewis, 1997), and a support plan for chronic or challenging behaviors (Fitzsimmons, 1998; Walker et al. 1996).

As administrators and school systems scramble to figure out what to do, Bulach, Pickett, and Boothe (1998) have developed a list of things that administrators should not do. The survey is a review of leader behaviors, or deficit skills, which may contribute to a climate fostering violence. The first area is called 'poor human relations'; administrators in this category are found to be abrasive, arrogant, and uncaring, and either unwilling or unable to give 'warm fuzzies', to circulate with staff, or compliment people for jobs well done (Davis, 1997; Hogan et al., 1990). Martin (1990) found that superintendents reported having to transfer or release school principals for avoidance, failure to monitor, and for lack of vision. DeLuca (1997) conducted factor analysis of 507 superintendent responses, and found negative relationships between principals being able to maintain their positions and "problem-solving/decision-making and delegating/monitoring" (p. 105). Bulach (1997) found the most problematic reported principal deficit as inability to give and receive feedback. Bulach (1998) offers suggestions for improving administrators' deficit skills, and posits the safety of the school as one of the main reasons why such sweeping reform is necessary.

System Intervention Programs

Over the past decade, several agencies have developed programs targeted at making schools safer. The programs reviewed here are unique in that they each take a comprehensive approach to the problems related to school violence.

Linquanti and Berliner (1994) define three types of plans that can be developed, depending on assessed needs of the school or system: those with a time-frame approach would include setting short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. Programs focused on behavior would be defined as either within the students' locus of control (such as communication skills, problem-solving) or those external to the student (such as locker searches or other behaviors by those in authority), or those which may be shared (students plus authorities). Thirdly, scope or focus of intervention would be defined as crisis intervention, vs. early intervention, vs. preventive intervention (such as physical safety ensured by metal detectors, vs. community-minded attitudes requiring social and cognitive interventions).The authors contend that assessment of policies and procedures, with attention to these three categories, will assist a system in attending to short-term or emergency needs, as well as planning for long-term preventive goals. Using the 3 x 3 matrix which these form, the authors describe and categorize 20 activities or programs which schools may use. The plan also provides specific questions to use, to help identify what are the needs, current status, and future plans a system has. The authors advocate preparedness at all levels, use of staff, faculty, students, parents, and community to formulate and communicate the plans, and ongoing efficacy assessment.

In 1994, Congress passed three laws related to school safety: the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (part of the Improving America's Schools Act), the Gun-Free Schools Act (part of The Educate America Act), and Safe, Disciplined and Alcohol-and Drug-Free Schools (Goal #7 of Goals 2000). As a result of this legislation, the U. S. Department of Education commissioned the National Center for Educational Statistics to develop a systematized and standardized method of cataloging and reporting crime, violence and discipline information in schools. A task force was formed in Spring of 1995, and their summative

document was completed and reproduced in September 1995 (US DOE, 1996). Twenty-two behaviors are listed as "major incident types". A system of reporting and coding is provided by this document, including type of incident, place by school and district, where on the school grounds the incident took place, number and type of school- vs.-non-school persons involved, and weapon description. This document itself is seen by many as a part of a systematic intervention, because all assessment begins with current statistics. Until a school, district, state, or federal agency can know what are the real problems, they cannot develop effective solutions. However, although the document exists, and is complete and thorough, many states do not require accurate reporting from school districts. Therefore, because of pressures related to funding, community support, and other issues, accurate reporting is still a significant problem.

In 1998, yet another request was made by the President to the US Department of Education, following a violent episode in Springfield, Oregon. The request was to develop an early warning guide to help "adults reach out to troubled children quickly and effectively" (p. 1). The subsequent Guide (Dwyer et al.,1998) includes several sections. In describing a "school that is safe and responsive to all children" (p.3), the Guide listed the following characteristics: focus on academic achievement, involvement of families, linking to community, positive relationships between student and staff and among students, open discussions about safety issues, treating students with respect, creating ways for students to share concerns, helping students feeling safe in expressing feelings, referral systems for students who needed them, extended day programs, promotion of good citizenship and character, immediate identification of problems and possible solutions, and support of students during transition to adult life and the work place. The Guide furnished a similar list of early warning signs, as well as a unique list of possible misinterpretations of warning signs. In an extensive list of interventions, categories included

parent tips, specific helps for troubled children, suggestions of positive actions for children to take, and knowledge of laws. Also included were characteristics of safe physical environment, analysis of system-wide policies, and guidelines to developing response teams. While it tends in its comprehensive format to be rather generic, the Guide does provide useful lists for each area indicated.

There are many topics related to school violence which are only mentioned in this review but which have widespread support, such as peer mediation. There are other topics which are not developed at all in this paper but which are being researched and implemented. The author has been continuously amazed at the amount of written attention school violence has received, by way of government reports, special issues of journals devoted to the topic, editorials, and texts. For example, in Goldstein and Conoley's (1998) School Violence Interventions alone, there are almost 2000 non-repeated references. In the search for this literature review, over 4000 sources were found. Therefore, this review is offered as reference for those who can use it, with the caveat that is represents a cursory overview of this field of study.

For those interested in the counselor's role, the reader is referred to the September, 1996 issue of The School Counselor, The 1994 (vol. 23) issue of School Psychology Review, and the October 1997 issue of The Professional School Counselor. For those interested in the brain and neurological processing of violence, the reader is referred to Perry's (1997) "Incubated in Terror: Neurodevelopmental Factors in the 'Cycle of Violence' ".

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